

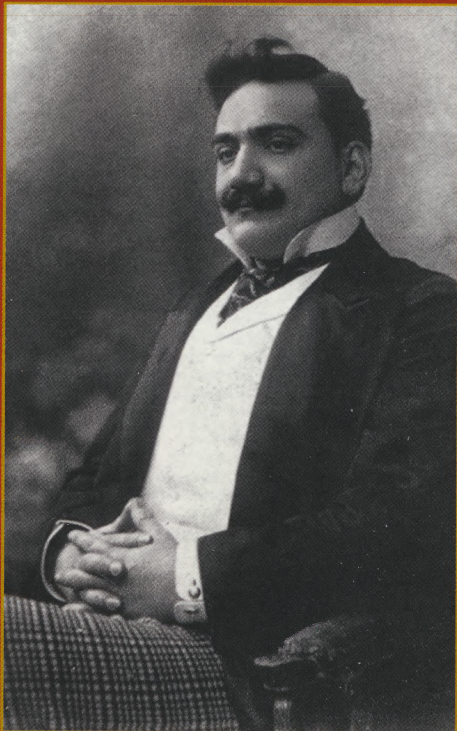
NAXOS

Historical

# GREAT SINGERS • CARUSO

AAD

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## Enrico **CARUSO**

### The Complete Recordings Volume 7

Includes:

La danza

Ella mi fu rapita!

Donna non vidi mai

O soave fanciulla

Ave Maria

Recorded in 1912 and 1913

New restorations by Ward Marston

8.110724

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO

8.110724

AAD

# The Complete Recordings of Enrico Caruso

## Volume 7

Playing  
Time  
75:31

1	VERDI: <i>I Lombardi, Act III – Qual voluttà trascorrere</i>	4:16	12	PUCCINI: <i>La bohème, Act I: O soave fanciulla</i>	3:44
2	FAURE: <i>Crucifix</i>	3:47	13	VERDI: <i>Don Carlo, Act II: Domanda al ciel Dio</i>	3:20
3	DONIZETTI: <i>Lucia di Lammermoor, Act II: Chi mi frena in tal momento?</i>	4:04	14	VERDI: <i>Il trovatore, Act IV: Se m'ami ancor...Ai nostri monti</i>	4:22
4	DE CRESCENZO: <i>Tarantella sincera</i>	3:41	15	TCHAIKOVSKY: <i>Pimpinella</i>	2:55
5	VERDI: <i>Rigoletto, Act IV: Bella figlia dell'amore</i>	3:38	16	VERDI: <i>Rigoletto, Act III: Ella mi fu rapita!...</i>	4:36
6	ROSSINI: <i>La danza</i>	3:14	17	BIZET: <i>Agnus Dei</i>	3:54
7	CARUSO: <i>Dreams of long ago</i>	4:00	18	PUCCINI: <i>Manon Lescaut, Act I: Donna non vidi mai</i>	2:50
8	SULLIVAN: <i>The Lost Chord</i>	4:05	19	KAHN: <i>Ave Maria</i>	4:06
9	D'HARDELLOT: <i>Because</i>	2:26	20	MASSENET: <i>Elégie</i>	4:04
10	GRANIER: <i>Hosanna</i>	4:18			
11	MASSENET: <i>Manon, Act II: Manon! On l'appelle Manon</i>	4:09			

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**Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Ward Marston**

Thanks to John Bolig and Lawrence F. Holdridge

All tracks recorded in New York City, except for tracks 7 and 8 which were recorded in Camden, New Jersey. • Music Notes: Hugh Griffiths  
Tracks 1-14, 16, and 18 accompanied by the Victor Orchestra.  
Tracks 15 and 17 accompanied by Gaetano Scognamiglio, piano.  
Tracks 19 and 20 accompanied by Percy B. Kahn, piano.  
A complete track list can be found on pages 5 & 6 of the booklet  
Cover image: Enrico Caruso c. 1925 (Private collection)

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CARUSO: Complete Recordings, Volume 7

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8.110724

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## Enrico Caruso

### Complete Recordings, Volume 7

Caruso's workload was always extraordinary, and the years 1909–11 had brought a kind of retribution. Cancelled performances and a second operation for nodules on the vocal cords even led to persistent rumours that his career might be over. The spring and summer of 1911 were given over entirely to recuperating, with none of the usual European tours and performances. Returning to America for the beginning of the season in November, he felt it necessary to send a wire reassuring his employers that he was 'arcimentevolissimevolmentebene' (supersplendidouslywell). Such was indeed the case. The 1911–12 season saw him appear in no fewer than nine different rôles, including Dick Johnson in *La Fanciulla del West*, which had received its première at the Met the previous year.

The tenor aria from that opera, 'Ch'ella mi creda', was an obvious candidate for recording, but the publisher Ricordi had refused permission, fearing, for reasons that must remain impenetrable to us, that it would affect sales of the vocal score. Apart from this obvious gap, very few solo numbers from Caruso's opera repertoire still remained unrecorded. The only new items on this CD are 'Ella mi fu rapita' from *Rigoletto* (track 16) and 'Donna non vidi mai', Des Grieux's expression of love from Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* (track 18). Ensembles, however, were a different matter. The fact that a piece had been recorded before was no bar to doing it again with different singers if the public had an interest in hearing them. And when it came to Tetrizzini, the interest of the public was tremendous.

Having failed – incomprehensibly – to persuade the management of the Met to take her on, Tetrizzini had gone on to sing for the Manhattan Opera company, building up an enormous following. Even after the Manhattan company had folded in 1909, she was never a regular at the Met, and the one occasion she appeared

on stage with Caruso in 1912 (on 6th February, in *Rigoletto*) proved to be the last time they ever sang in opera together. The great quartet 'Bella figlia dell'amore' (track 5) was recorded just seven days later. Together with the other ensemble showpiece on this CD, the sextet from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (track 3), it offers a wonderful opportunity to hear the two voices in combination. Victor was clearly fully alive to the potential appeal of bringing two great stars together in the studio. They already had these same two ensembles in their catalogue, recorded four years earlier when Marcella Sembrich was the soprano (Complete Caruso Vol. 3). Nor was the existence of the Tetrizzini versions regarded as a bar to doing them yet again five years later, when another vocal phenomenon had arrived on the American scene in the form of Amelita Galli-Curci.

Tetrizzini had first heard Caruso nearly twenty years before the recordings on this disc. After Caruso's death she recalled that his voice in those very early days had been quite unreliable, even on high Gs and As. When the two came together again in 1898, playing *La Bohème* in St Petersburg, she had been surprised by the enormous improvement:

*"I can hear that velvet voice now, and the impertinenza with which he lavishly poured forth those rich, round notes. It was the open voce napoletana, yet it had the soft caress of the voce della campana toscana. There was never a doubt in my mind. I placed him then and there as an extraordinary and unique tenor."*

Fourteen years on from St Petersburg, it is a different story again. After countless performances of *Aida* and *Pagliacci*, the voice does not caress in the way that it did. Lyricism has to some extent been sacrificed for power and weight of tone, but the sensitivity and musicality are on a higher level altogether. In all his

ensembles Caruso shows a wonderful ability to blend with his partners, most perfectly exemplified on this CD by the duet from *Don Carlo* with his old friend Antonio Scotti (track 13). Like the famous 'Solenne in quest'ora' recorded in 1906 (Complete Caruso Vol. 3, 8.110708), this too is a miracle of unanimity and understanding, more remarkable for the fact that it was the first and only take.

Two further examples of marvellous ensemble singing in Verdi are provided by excerpts from *I Lombardi* (track 1) and *Il Trovatore* (track 14): in the former Caruso accompanies Frances Alda (Mrs Giulio Gatti-Casazza), a relative newcomer to the Met who became a regular Mimì to his Rodolfo. The duet from Act I of *La Bohème* heard here (track 12), however, was made with a friend and partner of many years' standing, Geraldine Farrar, admired in New York as much for her beauty as her singing. This was not intended to compete with the near-perfect version that Caruso had recorded with Melba in 1907 (Complete Caruso Vol. 3). In fact, it was recorded for a private collectors' club and never released to the public at all.

Half the items on this CD are songs, many of them by composers of no significance (including Caruso

himself, track 7). It is perhaps worth making clear that 'Crucifix' (track 2) was written not by Fauré (as soon becomes obvious when we listen to it), but a French baritone called Jean-Baptiste Faure. Rossini's 'La danza' (track 6) has long been a popular number, as too was Sullivan's 'The Lost Chord' (track 8) in Caruso's time. Even today it remains probably the only one of Sullivan's many songs that is still known. There may have been a special reason why Victor chose to record it at that particular moment. Two weeks earlier, on the night of 14/15th April, 1,513 lives had been lost when the *Titanic* sank off Newfoundland, and a benefit night was staged at the Met on the evening of 29th April to raise money for the victims' families. On that occasion Caruso sang 'The Lost Chord', the very song which he had just recorded that afternoon. Without being over-cynical, one may fairly wonder whether someone had decided that if it was going to be associated in this way with the world's greatest maritime disaster it might not be such a bad idea to get it into the record shops as fast as possible.

Hugh Griffith

### Ward Marston

In 1997 Ward Marston was nominated for the Best Historical Album Grammy Award for his production work on BMG's Fritz Kreisler collection. According to the Chicago Tribune, Marston's name is 'synonymous with tender loving care to collectors of historical CDs'. Opera News calls his work 'revelatory', and Fanfare deems him 'miraculous'. In 1996 Ward Marston received the Gramophone award for Historical Vocal Recording of the Year, honouring his production and engineering work on Romophone's complete recordings of Lucrezia Bori. He also served as re-recording engineer for the Franklin Mint's Arturo Toscanini issue and BMG's Sergey Rachmaninov recordings, both winners of the Best Historical Album Grammy.

Born blind in 1952, Ward Marston has amassed tens of thousands of opera classical records over the past four decades. Following a stint in radio while a student at Williams College, he became well-known as a reissue producer in 1979, when he restored the earliest known stereo recording made by the Bell Telephone Laboratories in 1932.

In the past, Ward Marston has produced records for a number of major and specialist record companies. Now he is bringing his distinctive sonic vision to bear on works released on the Naxos Historical label. Ultimately his goal is to make the music he remasters sound as natural as possible and true to life by 'lifting the voices' off his old 78 rpm recordings. His aim is to promote the importance of preserving old recordings and make available the works of great musicians who need to be heard.

## **Producer's Note:**

We have now arrived at the halfway point of this series and at this juncture, I would like to discuss the way in which the sound of Caruso's recordings changed over the span of his career. If one listens to his records in chronological sequence, one cannot help noticing that the Victor Company altered its recording techniques from time to time. In the case of Caruso, these changes produced markedly different recordings of his voice.

Caruso's first group of Victor records from 1904-5 sound quite natural, possessing a strong vocal presence with a slight hint of room ambience. The 1906 recordings, his first with orchestral accompaniment, have him placed too far from the recording horn. Consequently, the voice sounds thin, and somewhat anaemic. During the following two years, Victor engineers made a considerable sonic improvement by once again placing the singers closer to the horn. For Caruso, this made a tremendous difference and his 1908 through 1911 recordings are miraculous. His voice is vivid and well focused without any sign of sonic distortion caused by over-driving the recording apparatus.

However, at some point during late 1911 or early 1912, Caruso's recordings began to take on an unpleasant strident quality which is evident specifically in his forte singing of high A flats and As. Good examples of this recording flaw can be heard during the final bars of tracks 9, 10, 16 and 18. This metallic sound in Caruso's upper voice is probably caused by a sympathetic resonance in the recording diaphragm. Sadly, the Victor Company did not save any technical notes concerning alterations in their recording process, but I suspect that they were constantly experimenting with various types of horns and diaphragms aimed at producing louder and more brilliant records. Whatever the innovation, the result was that Caruso's high notes set up a sympathetic resonance with the apparatus, which was mechanically transferred to the recording. Apparently, this problem went unnoticed at the time and it continued to plague quite a number of Caruso's discs from this point on. This undesirable resonance can be somewhat attenuated by using a parametric equaliser but corrective action of this type tends to diminish the thrust and power of Caruso's voice. In remastering these discs, I have attempted to lessen the stridency of the high notes without compromising the voice.

The present transfers were made from mint condition original pressings except for tracks 12, 16, 19, and 20. These tracks were remastered from 1930s pressings, which possessed quieter surfaces. Special care has been taken to transfer each disc at the proper speed so that it accurately reflects the speed at which the recording was originally made. The recordings in this volume are presented in chronological order by recording date.

**Ward Marston**

- 1** **VERDI: I Lombardi, Act III – Qual voluttà trascorrere** 4:16  
Frances Alda, soprano;  
Marcel Journet, bass  
(7th January 1912, Mat. C-11441-1) 95211
- 2** **Jean-Baptiste FAURE: Crucifix** 3:47  
Marcel Journet, bass  
(7th January 1912, Mat. C-11442-1) 89054
- 3** **DONIZETTI:  
Lucia di Lammermoor: Act II:  
Chi mi frena in tal momento?** 4:04  
Luisa Tetrazzini, soprano;  
Josephine Jacoby, mezzo-soprano;  
Angelo Bada, baritone;  
Pasquale Amato, baritone;  
Marcel Journet, bass  
(19th January 1912, Mat. C-11445-3) 96201
- 4** **DE CRESCENZO: Tarantella sincera** 3:41  
(19th January 1912, Mat. C-11472-1) 88347
- 5** **VERDI: Rigoletto: Act IV:  
Bella figlia dell'amore** 3:38  
Luisa Tetrazzini, soprano;  
Josephine Jacoby, mezzo-soprano;  
Pasquale Amato, baritone  
(13th February 1912, Mat. C-11447-4)  
first issued on HMV 2-054038
- 6** **ROSSINI: La danza** 3:14  
(13th February 1912, Mat. C-11590-1) 88355
- 7** **CARUSO: Dreams of long ago** 4:00  
(18th April 1912, Mat. C-11616-3) 88376
- 8** **SULLIVAN: The Lost Chord** 4:05  
(29th April 1912, Mat. C-11942-1) 88378
- 9** **D'HARDELLOT: Because** 2:26  
(7th December 1912, Mat. B-12680-2) 87122
- 10** **GRANIER: Hosanna** 4:18  
(7th December 1912, Mat. C-12681-2) 88403
- 11** **MASSENET: Manon, Act II:  
Manon! On l'appelle Manon** 4:09  
Geraldine Farrar, soprano  
(30th December 1912, Mat. C-12750-2) 89059
- 12** **PUCCHINI: La bohème, Act I:  
O soave fanciulla** 3:44  
Geraldine Farrar, soprano  
(30th December 1912, Mat. C-12751-1)  
first issued on IRCC 61
- 13** **VERDI: Don Carlo, Act II:  
Domanda al ciel...  
Dio, che nell'alma infondere** 3:20  
Antonio Scotti, baritone  
(30th December 1912, Mat. C-12752-1) 89064
- 14** **VERDI: Il trovatore, Act IV:  
Se m'ami ancor...Ai nostri monti** 4:22  
Ernestine Schumann-Heink, mezzo-soprano  
(17th January 1913, Mat. C-12804-2) 89060
- 15** **TCHAIKOVSKY: Pimpinella** 2:55  
(Florentine Air, Op. 38, No. 6)  
(17th January 1913, Mat. B-12805-2) 87128
- 16** **VERDI: Rigoletto, Act III:  
Ella mi fu rapita!...  
Parmi veder le lagrime** 4:36  
(24th February 1913, Mat. C-11421-2) 88429



**17** **BIZET: Agnus Dei** 3:54  
(24th February 1913, Mat. C-12942-1) 88425

**18** **PUCCHINI: Manon Lescaut, Act I:**  
**Donna non vidi mai** 2:50  
(24th February 1913, Mat. B-12945-1) 87135

**19** **KAHN: Ave Maria** 4:06  
Mischa Elman, violin  
(20th March 1913, Mat. C-13004-1) 89065

**20** **MASSENET: Elégie** 4:04  
Mischa Elman, violin  
(20th March 1913, Mat. C-13005-1) 89066

All tracks recorded in New York City,  
except for tracks 7 and 8 which were recorded in Camden, New Jersey.  
Tracks 1-14, and 16 accompanied by the Victor Orchestra.  
Track 18 accompanied by the Victor Orchestra and A. Regis Rossini, Harp  
Tracks 1-4 conducted by Walter B. Rogers.  
Tracks 15 and 17 accompanied by Gaetano Scognamiglio, piano.  
Tracks 19 and 20 accompanied by Percy B. Kahn, piano.

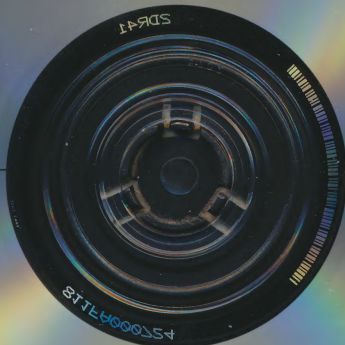
Tracks 1, 3-6, 12-16, and 18 sung in Italian.  
Tracks 2, 9-11, and 20 sung in French.  
Tracks 7 and 8 sung in English.  
Tracks 17 and 19 sung in Latin.

The Complete Recordings of  
Enrico Caruso  
Volume 7

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- 1 Qual voluttà trascorrere 2 Crucifix 3 Chi mi frena in tal momento?  
4 Tarantella sincera 5 Bella figlia dell'amore  
6 La danza 7 Dreams of long ago 8 The Lost Chord  
9 Because 10 Hosanna 11 Manon! On l'appelle Manon  
12 O soave fanciulla 13 Domanda al ciel... 14 Se m'ami ancor...  
15 Pimpinella 16 Ella mi fu rapita!... 17 Agnus Dei  
18 Donna non vidi mai 19 Ave Maria 20 Elégie

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